

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

Claim 1 (Withdrawn) A steel which is a ferritic heat-resistant steel containing 15 mass% or less of Cr, in which at least the region up to 10 μm defined by surface depth is made of a worked texture composed of extended ferritic grains or superfine texture composed of ferrites 3 μm or less in grain diameter, and having a protective coating film on the surface.

Claim 2 (Withdrawn) The steel of Claim 1, wherein the shorter diameter of the extended ferritic grains thereof is 5 μm or less.

Claim 3 (Previously Presented) The steel of Claim 1 wherein the shorter diameter of the extended ferritic grains is 3 μm or less, or the grain diameter of the ferrites is 1 μm or less.

Claim 4 (Currently Amended) A production method for a ferritic heat-resistant steel containing 7 to 15 mass% of Cr, in which at least the region up to 10 μm defined by surface depth is made of a worked texture composed of extended ferritic grains of superfine texture composed of ferrites 3 μm or less in grain diameter, and having a protective coating film on the surface, ~~steel of claim 1~~ which comprises applying working with a working degree of 0.7 or higher in true strain in the temperature range of from 400 to 800°C to form a worked texture or superfine ferrite grain texture at least in the region up to 10 μm defined by surface depth, and by applying pre-oxidation treatment in an atmosphere containing gaseous oxygen for 30 to 90 minutes at 400 to 800°C to form a protective coating film.

Claim 5 (Cancelled)

Claim 6 (Cancelled)